

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An audience response determination apparatus for determining an audience response to displayed content, comprising:

overall state detection means for producing an image of members of said audience and detecting motion vectors as a function of movement of individual members of an audience in said image, information indicative of a respective one of plural response states of said individual members and load information indicative of a respective response load condition of said individual members, thereby estimating the overall response state of an audience;

individual state detection means for detecting individual load conditions of the members of the audience, thereby representing the individual response states of the members of the audience;

auxiliary information means for supplying auxiliary information indicating whether the content currently is displayed and, if so, whether said content is video or audio content and, if video content, said auxiliary information is indicative of a scene in said video content;

determination means for determining the audience response on the basis of the detected overall state of said audience, the detected load conditions of said members, and said supplied auxiliary information, and

wherein said determination means for determining the audience response comprises an audience state determination unit for estimating whether the determined audience response is one of a predetermined number of types of responses.

2. (Original) An audience response determination apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said overall state detection means takes an image of the entire audience and detects the overall bodily state of the audience based on the image taken.

3. (Previously Presented) An audience response determination apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said overall state detection means collects sounds uttered by the entire audience and detects the overall state of the audience based on the sounds collected.

4. (Previously Presented) An audience response determination apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the load condition detected by said individual state detection means is a load applied to each of the audience's seats.

5. (Previously Presented) An audience response determination apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the load condition detected by said individual state detection means is a stepping force provided by each member of said audience.

6. (Original) An audience response determination apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said individual state detection means comprises:
first stepping force detection means for detecting a stepping force provided by the left foot of each member of said audience; and
second stepping force detection means for detecting a stepping force provided by the right foot of each member of said audience.

7. (Currently Amended) A playback output control system for controlling the output from playback means for the playback and output of data to be seen or heard by an audience, comprising:

overall state detection means for producing an image of members of said audience and detecting motion vectors as a function of movement of individual members of an audience in said image, including information indicative of a respective one of plural response states of said individual members and load information indicative of a respective response load condition of said individual members, thereby estimating an overall response state of said audience;

individual state detection means for detecting individual load conditions of the members of the audience, thereby representing individual response states of the members of said audience;

auxiliary information means for supplying auxiliary information indicating whether the content currently is displayed and, if so, whether said content is video or audio content and, if video content, said auxiliary information is indicative of a scene in said video content;

determination means for determining an audience response on the basis of the detected overall state of said audience, the detected load conditions of said members, and said supplied auxiliary information,

wherein said determination means for determining an audience response comprises an audience state determination unit for estimating whether the determined audience response is one of a predetermined number of types of responses; and

control means for controlling the operation of said playback means based on the type of audience response determined by said determination means.

8. (Original) A playback output control system according to claim 7, wherein said control means selects, on the basis of said audience response determined by said determination means, data to be played back by said playback means.

9. (Original) A playback output control system according to claim 7, wherein said control means controls, on the basis of said audience response determined by said determination means, signal processing on the data played back by said playback means.

10. (Previously Presented) A playback output control system according to claim 7, wherein said overall state detection means takes an image of said audience and detects the overall bodily state of said audience based on the image.

11. (Previously Presented) A playback output control system according to claim 10, further comprising reduction means for reducing the effect of video data played back by and output from said playback means, wherein said overall state detection means detects the overall bodily state of said audience by reducing the effect of said video data on said image of said audience.

12. (Previously Presented) A playback output control system according to claim 7, wherein said overall state detection means detects the overall state of said audience by collecting sounds emitted by the audience.

13. (Previously Presented) A playback output control system according to claim 12, further comprising reduction means for reducing the effect of sound data played back and output by said playback means, wherein overall state detection means detects the overall state of the audience by reducing the effect of said sound data on the collected sounds emitted by said audience.

14. (Original) A playback output control system according to claim 12, wherein said overall state detection means detects the overall state of the audience by comparing the collected sounds with a reference sound level.

15. (Original) A playback output control system according to claim 14, further comprising varying means for varying said reference sound level on the basis of the audience size.

16. (Original) A playback output control system according to claim 12, further comprising a filter which passes a predetermined audio band, wherein said overall state determination means detects the overall state of the audience based on the sound passed through said filter.

17. (Previously Presented) A playback output control system according to claim 7, wherein the load condition detected by said individual state detection means is a load applied to each of the audience's seats.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously Presented) A playback output control system according to claim 7, wherein the load condition detected by said individual state detection means is a stepping force provided by each member of the audience.

20. (Original) A playback output control system according to claim 19, wherein said individual state detection means comprises:
first stepping force detection means for detecting a stepping force provided by the left foot of each member of the audience; and
second stepping force detection means for detecting a stepping force provided by the right foot of each member of the audience.

21. (Currently Amended) An audience response determination method for determining an audience response to displayed content, comprising the steps of:
producing an image of members of said audience and detecting motion vectors as a function of movement of individual members of an audience in said image, information indicative of a respective one of plural response states of said individual members and load information indicative of a respective response load condition of said individual members, thereby estimating an overall response state of an audience;
detecting individual load conditions of the members of the audience, thereby representing individual response states of the members of said audience;

supplying auxiliary information indicating whether the content currently is displayed and, if so, whether said content is video or audio content and, if video content, said auxiliary information is indicative of a scene in said video content;

determining the audience response based on the detected overall state of said audience, the detected load conditions of the members of said audience, and said supplied auxiliary information, and

wherein the audience response is determined by estimating whether the determined audience response is one of a predetermined number of types of responses.

22. (Currently Amended) A playback output control method for controlling a playback output, comprising the steps of:

producing an image of members of said audience and detecting motion vectors as a function of movement of individual members of an audience in said image, information indicative of a respective one of plural response states of said individual members and load information indicative of a respective response load condition of said individual members, thereby estimating an overall response state of an audience;

detecting individual load conditions of members of the audience, thereby representing individual response states of the members of said audience;

supplying auxiliary information indicating whether content currently is being played back and, if so, whether said content is video or audio content and, if video content, said auxiliary information is indicative of a scene in said video content;

determining an audience response based on the detected overall state of said audience, the detected load conditions of the members of said audience, and said supplied auxiliary information,

wherein the audience response is determined by estimating whether the determined audience response is one of a predetermined number of types of responses, and

controlling the playback operation of data to be seen or heard by said audience based on the type of audience response that is determined.

23. (Currently Amended) A data recording medium recording a processing program comprising the steps of:

producing an image of members of said audience and detecting motion vectors as a function of movement of individual members of an audience in said image, information indicative of a respective one of plural response states of said individual members and load information indicative of a respective response load condition of said individual members, thereby estimating an overall response state of an audience;

detecting individual load conditions of the members of the audience, thereby representing individual response states of the members of said audience;

supplying auxiliary information indicating whether content currently is being played back and, if so, whether said content is video or audio content and, if video content, said auxiliary information is indicative of a scene in said video content;

determining an audience response based on the detected overall state of said audience, the detected load conditions of the members of said audience, and said supplied auxiliary information, and

wherein the audience response is determined by estimating whether the determined audience response is one of a predetermined number of types of responses.

24. (Currently Amended) A data recording medium recording a processing program comprising the steps of:

producing an image of members of said audience and detecting motion vectors as a function of movement of individual members of an audience in said image, information indicative of a respective one of plural response states of said individual members and load information indicative of a respective response load condition of said individual members, thereby estimating an overall response state of an audience;

detecting individual load conditions of members of the audience, thereby representing individual response states of the members of said audience;

supplying auxiliary information indicating whether content is currently played back and, if so, whether said content is video or audio content and, if video content, said auxiliary information is indicative of a scene in said video content;

determining an audience response based on the detected overall state of said audience, the detected load conditions of the members of said audience, and said supplied auxiliary information,

wherein the audience response is determined by estimating whether the determined audience response is one of a predetermined number of types of responses, and

controlling a playback operation of data to be seen or heard by said audience based on the type of audience response that is determined.

25. (Previously Presented) An audience response determination apparatus for determining an audience response to displayed content, comprising:

overall state detection means for detecting the overall state of an audience;

individual state detection means for detecting individual load conditions of the members of the audience, thereby representing the individual states of the members of the audience;

auxiliary information means for supplying auxiliary information indicating the content currently displayed;

determination means for determining the audience response on the basis of the detected overall state of said audience, the detected load conditions of said members, and said supplied auxiliary information, and

wherein said determination means for determining the audience response comprises an audience state determination unit for estimating whether (i) most of the members of the audience are intently watching or listening to the content, (ii) most of the members of the audience are clapping their hands or singing along with the sound of the content, (iii) most of the members of the audience are clapping their hands or shouting, (iv) most of the members of the audience are applauding or cheering, or (v) most of the members of the audience are standing.